storage facilities and such customers are supplied from the nearest depot in the adjoining States. In addition Government consumers like Railways, Defence and Public Sector Undertakings like Steel, Coal Power etc. as well as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Agreement customers have been exempted from the above restrictions.

Allocation of Kerosene to Low Volume Dealers

880. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1617 given in Rajya Sabha on 9th March, 2000 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the additional allocation of kerosene is given to low volume dealers to make them economically viable;

(b) how much additional quantity of kerosene has been allocated to Yamuna Nagar district and quantity allocated to low volume dealers;

(c) whether this additional allocation has been made to all the low volume dealers; and

(d) if not, the officers responsible who have given additional allocation to high volume dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) The quota of kerosene to the dealers in a district is fixed by the oil companies/district authorities depending on the allocation made by the State Government to the district on a historical basis. Whenever any additional allocation of kerosene is made to the district, the endeavour is to allocate the additional quantity to the low-volume dealers who have not reached the ceiling of 250 KL per month.

(b) No additional quantity of kerosene was allocated to Yamuna Nagar district during 1999-2000 and April to June, 2000.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Extension to the Chairmen of HPCL and BPCL

881. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present Chairmen of HPCL and BPCL have completed their tenure and are on extension for three months;

(b) if so, how many times such extensions have already been given to these officers and the reasons for repeated extensions;

(c) whether Chairman on extension can fulfil the job requirement and objectives;

(d) whether Government are facing shortage of suitable persons for the post of Chairmen of such Corporations; and

(e) if not, the reasons as to why regular appointments are not being made by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (e) The present Chairman and Managing Director (C and MD) of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and C and MD, Bharat Petroleum Corportion Limited (BPCL) were initially appointed for a period of 5 years or till the date of their superannuation, whichever was earlier. The initial tenure of appointment of Shri H.L. Zutshi, C and MD, HPCL and Shri U. Sundararajan, C and MD, BPCL expired on 21.6.2000 and 3.10.1999 respectively. However, their dates of superannuation being 31.5.2002 and 30.06.2002 respectively, they are elígible for further extension of tenure after the expiry of initial tenure. Such extension of tenure is given after review of their performance. Pending review of his performance. C and MD, HPCL has been given adhoc extension for a period of 3 months beyond 21.6.2000. As regards tenure of C and MD, BPCL pending review of his performance he was given adhoc extension of 3 months beyond 3.10.1999. His tenure has now been extended on regular basis up to the date of his superannuation i.e. 30.6.2002.

Tie-up of Gail and Shell International for Oil Exploration

882. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gas Authority of India Ltd. had entered into a tie-up with Shell International for oil exploration;

(b) if so, the terms of the agreement; and

(c) the areas where the oil exploration is proposed to be taken up jointly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) GAIL and Shell